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Drugs, family problems push more children to crime: judge

The breakdown of the family and increased drug use among children are two leading factors in increased juvenile crime, according to a local jurist.

Many juvenile offenders are part of a single-parent family with little or no knowledge of their fathers, said Judge Joseph Moore, the featured speaker at Monday's Neighborhood Watch meeting. "They're kids that don't have a chance from the day they're born," he said.

A lack of parenting causes many children to turn to drugs, including cocaine, crack and marijuana, Moore said. The children steal, become prostitutes or commit other crimes to feed their drug habits. "We have a drug-infested society," Moore said, adding

cocaine and crack are particularly prevalent - and addicting.

Moore showed contempt for dealers who get children hooked on crack and cocaine. "It ruins (children's) lives," he said. "How someone, knowing that, can sell it to a kid is beyond my comprehension."

Whatever the cause of their criminal activity, more and more juveniles are appearing in court. And judges are limited in what they can do with those children, Moore said.

Juvenile offenders may be given a continuance under supervision, similar to court supervision for

See JUDGE on other side

New legal corporation replaces Hoopeston partnership

Attorneys Calvin Hultquist, William Roberts and Randy Lakey have formed a new law corporation which will operate in place of the former partnership, Hultquist & Giffin.

The firm has been named Hultquist, Roberts & Lakey, P.C.

"We designed the firm to permit the attorneys to focus on their individual areas of practice so we may better address the needs of our clients," Hultquist said. "When I opened my office, I wanted to be able to give each of my clients special attention. I got so busy I was unable to even keep up with my phone calls and that bothered me. The new, larger firm will be able to more efficiently handle the large volume business."

Roberts, who recently retired as Circuit Judge of Ford County after 22 years of service, was in private practice before being named a judge and also served as assistant public defender in Champaign. He operates a small farm and is active in civic affairs in Paxton. He is a board

member of the Ford County economic development group.

Lakey was a former Vermilion County assistant state's attorney before joining Doyle & Tuggle, handling personal injury and criminal defense cases. He will concentrate in those areas in the new corporation.

Lakey, who resides in Danville, will spend half his time in Danville and the other half in Hoopeston.

Hultquist said adding new attorneys was necessary to accomodate time he must spend traveling to defend clients. "I spent a lot of time investigating murder cases and now find myself handling the defense of several accused murderers throughout the state," he said. "I have also been representing people all over the Midwest on federal criminal cases, which has also required that I travel frequently.

"Although we are now a much larger firm, we will remain the friendly business we have always been," Hultquist added.

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Judge continued from other side

adults, he said. Other options include probation, intensive probation and sending the juvenile to the Department of Corrections.

Sending a child to corrections is the last resort, Moore said, adding that juvenile sentences are determined not by the court but by the Department of Corrections. “We send them there and 60, 90 days later we’re notified that they’ve been released,” he said.

The reason for the short sentences are two-fold, Moore

said. First, there is a shortage of facilities to house juveniles and a lack of funds to build more facilities. The second reason, he said, is an increase in the number of juveniles in the system. “Corrections is completely overwhelmed by juveniles,” he said.

After spending the last year and a half handling juvenile cases, Moore believes more intermediate program are necessary, giving judges an option stronger than probation but less drastic than incarceration.

“There’s a crying need for intermediate programs,” he said. “And we need tougher juvenile laws, there’s no doubt about it.”

The increasing number of juvenile offenders, coupled with limited resources, proves as frustrating for judges as it is for police officers and prosecutors, Moore said. “Juvenile court’s a challenge and it can be darn frustrating,” he said.

The problem of juvenile crime is not just in large

cities, Moore said. “Don’t think for one minute that Hoopeston is exempt,” he said. “We’re well-represented in juvenile crime.”

Solving juvenile crime problems must become a societal priority, he said. All aspects of society - schools, churches and the justice system - must work together, he said.

Moore also spoke about abused and neglected children and eased fears expressed by those attending on reports that the Department of Children and Family Services will remove children from homes where the parents spank children. “Nobody’s ever going to get convicted of abuse in my courtroom if they spank a child,” he said.

Lady Cornjerkers end season with super-sectional loss

The Hoopeston Area Lady Cornjerkers made it to the Sweet 16 Monday night, but got no kiss from Lady Luck.

The ladies, making their debut in the super-sectional, lost to Illiana Christian, 66-25 in Monday night action at Herscher.

Mychelle Coon led scoring for Hoopeston with 15 points, 12 of which came from three-point shots. Esther McQuigg and Marissa Bushue each chipped in

five, including a three-pointer by McQuigg, who also made two free throws, the team’s only points in the fourth quarter.

Monday’s loss brought the Cornjerkers to a season tally of 28-3.

Bushue was named this week’s High School Athlete of the Week by the Champaign News-Gazette. Honorable mention went to Bushue’s team mates Megan Bowers and Mychelle Coon.

Obituaries

KIMBLE - Arthur Kimble, 78, of Milford, died at 2:20 p.. Saturday, Feb. 22, 1997, at the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Phoenix, Ariz. Funeral services will be at 10:30 a.m. Thursday at the Milford Christian Church. Burial, with military graveside rites, will be in Maple Grove Cemetery, Milford. Visitation will be 4-8 p.m. Wednesday at the Knapp Funeral Home and one hour before services at the church. Memorials are suggested to the Milford Christian Church.

Court dispositions

Feb. 20: Rick Bugera, Hoopeston, deceptive practice arraignment; restitution paid, rule to show cause issued.

Connie Donnelly, Terre Haute, Ind., to pay \$147.45 restitution, failed to appear; continued.

Jim Dietz, Hoopeston, leash law, pleaded guilty; \$45 total, status check March 6.

Thomas Edwards, Hoopeston, to pay \$75; continued to March 6.

Joyce Fink, Hoopeston, deceptive practice; \$83 total, paid \$180.66 restitution.

Maria Furlong, Hoopeston, inoculation and leash law, failed to appear; summons issued.

Stuart Iscenogle, Bellflower, deceptive practice, failed to appear; summons issued.

Kathy Jones, Hoopeston, deceptive practice, failed to appear; summons issued.

Michael Kirts, Hoopeston, parked in handicapped zone; nolle pros.

Ray Lazarich, Hoopeston, leash law, cruelty prohibited, license required, inoculation, owner’s

duties; nolle pros.

Pat Longest, Hoopeston, two counts leash law, failed to appear; summons issued.

Joey Miles, Hoopeston, to pay \$185; 30 days to pay.

William Mills, Rossville, deceptive practice, pleaded not guilty; bench trial April 3.

In the hospital

Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital
Feb. 24, 1997

Admitted: none.

Discharged: none.

Weather

Ninety percent chance of rain today. High in the low to mid 40s. Tonight, rain with thunderstorms likely. Low in the mid 30s. Tomorrow, chance of rain early. High near 38, low near 31.



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